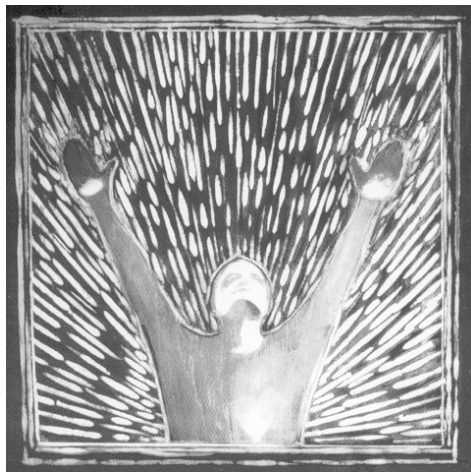


MUSIC MINISTRY HANDBOOK

Amazing Grace Worship Service



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GRACE CHURCH

MUSIC MINISTRY HANDBOOK

PURPOSE OF THIS HANDBOOK

This handbook is not meant to be intimidating or overwhelming. It is meant to inspire each of us to reflect and prayerfully consider our motives and desires for being part of the music ministry at Grace Church. We also want to ensure that all those involved in the music ministry are walking together in agreement regarding our purpose, and what is expected of every member. This isn't just about music, it's also about ministry.

OUR PURPOSE

To be a team of worshipping musicians and singers whose purpose and desire is to direct the hearts of those we are leading toward God in worship selflessly, inconspicuously, and with skill. It is to be the modern day Levites, set apart for the purpose of leading God's people in worship. .

WHAT IT MEANS TO BE A MODERN DAY LEVITE

*"At that time the Lord set apart the tribe of Levi to carry the ark of the Covenant of the Lord, to stand before the Lord to minister and to pronounce blessings in his name, as they still do today." –
- Deuteronomy 10:8*

The above scripture describes Israel's equivalent of a worship team, the tribe of Levi. From it, we can derive four basic components of being on the worship team:

1. Being set apart

We consider being on the worship team a calling from God. This calling is not simply about musical talent, but about one's identity as a worshiper of God. While all of God's people are called to be worshipers, we believe there are some who are called to the music ministry and act as lead worshipers.

2. Carrying the very presence of God (as represented by the Ark of the Covenant)

Because of the holy nature of this calling, as a worship team we hold each other to high spiritual standards. We should strive to live lives worthy of the position and visibility God has granted us.

3. Standing before the Lord and ministering to Him

When on the platform, we play our music for the audience of God, setting an example for the congregation. Only when He responds to us by drawing closer do we believe we've hit the target, regardless of how well we have played.

4. Pronouncing blessings in His name to the gathered church

We take seriously our responsibility to serve the gathered church by blessing them through our playing, singing, and speaking. This is both an honored privilege and an awesome responsibility.

MEMBERSHIP CRITERIA

Membership in the music ministry is based upon talent/skill, servant attitude, commitment, spiritual maturity, and a heart for worship - but not necessarily in that order. All of these can be nurtured and grown, if the passion and determination exist in the individual. *Realize it is a privilege to lead God's people in worship, and not necessarily a right.* It is not the place to show-off our talents or to draw attention to ourselves in any way. Individuals who are unwilling to be held accountable to or meet these guidelines are encouraged to share their gifts in other ways within the body.

Individuals wishing to join this music ministry should submit the Music Ministry Application found on the website praiseteam.WilliamDoney.com. At this time, youth are to participate in existing choirs and/or the praise team available for their age group. In rare cases a teenager may be invited to apply if a specific musical need arises, and they show exceptional skill, promise and maturity.

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THOSE IN THIS MUSIC MINISTRY WILL HOLD EACH ACCOUNTABLE TO:

- *be born-again Christians exhibiting a healthy and growing walk with Jesus* - we are worshipers who are leading others in worship of our God. An unbeliever is incapable of worshiping God, and therefore, leading worship. One cannot lead others where one has not already been. *We are not just attempting to build a band; we are also building a team of worshippers.*
- *be in regular fellowship with God* – making time to get to know Him more through His Word, prayer, personal worship, etc. Worship is not a one-day-a-week, Sunday-morning-only event. It should be the culmination of a week lived in worship. It should be a lifestyle, of continually praising our Creator and submitting to His will.
- *be spiritually mature and obedient to the Word of God* – like it or not, everyone involved in the worship ministry and/or “up front” during a service is seen by the congregation as a leader, and as such, should exemplify a growing walk with Christ, both inside and outside the church walls. The worship team gets a lot of attention because of the very nature of what we do. It is a very public role to have. And left unchecked, it can be easy to begin to believe we are special or better than those we lead. It follows then that we should strive to live lives worthy of the position and visibility God has granted us.
- *worship while leading worship* – We should lead by example, directing our hearts and passion toward Him in authentic, physical expressions of worship. Preparation is a huge part of this. If you are struggling to follow or play the chords, or read the lyrics off your music sheet, your focus will not be on God.
- *submit to leadership* - of Grace Church, the AG worship team, as well as the team leader. The nature of this ministry also requires a strong commitment to the people of this church. We must remember to always come with a servant attitude.
- *communicate effectively* - have questions? Have a new idea? Getting distracted or frustrated? Something bothering you? Talk to us. Let the team leader know of any concerns, changes in schedule, potential absences, emergencies or illness. Have the team leader’s cell number on your cell. We are your brothers and sisters in Christ, not just band leaders. We’re here to serve and equip you to grow and succeed as a passionate follower of Jesus
- *be musically skillful* – just as some are called to preach and others aren’t, so are some called to lead musical worship and others aren’t. There are Biblical examples where individuals were set apart to lead the people in worship because they were skillful. Prayerfully consider if this is your area of giftedness. The music ministry is not the place for you to learn how to play your instrument, or learn how to sing.
- *be committed to musical excellence* – learn your music, hone your skills. Continually grow and practice your skills – as God deserves our best. We’re not looking for perfection, as that is not required to serve God, but we do expect you to be proficient and always prepared. You have to be willing to give Him your best. Practice at home and take the commitment seriously. Remember that wrong notes, poor singing, and less-than-average music can distract others from focusing on God as easily as someone who is ‘showing off’ or performing. This can also interrupt the movement of the Holy Spirit in a worship service. And we certainly don’t want to limit what God will do simply because we can’t handle it musically.

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- *be committed to rehearsals* – those scheduled to lead on Sunday morning will be required to attend rehearsal the Tuesday night prior. Our goal is to develop as musicians, as a team, and grow as leaders of worship. Even professional musicians understand the importance of rehearsing together.
- *be prepared* – come to rehearsals and services musically prepared by listening to and practicing songs beforehand, and having all your music ready and in order. This also includes being punctual – arrive early enough to setup up so the team may start promptly at the planned time. Being on time reflects your level of commitment. We understand that life happens, so please contact the team leader when it happens last minute and interferes with a rehearsal or service.
- *be a team player* – Do your best to be present, prompt & prepared. Get to know and support your band mates. Work through differences with gentleness. Play selectively. Some people are very gifted musicians and/or vocalists, but for one reason or another (vocal range, musical style, personality, etc) have trouble flowing or fitting with the team. Note that not all gifted musicians or soloists necessarily make good team members.
- *have the support of their family* – it is important that your family supports your involvement in this ministry and accepts the necessary time commitment, which is not insignificant. Your family should always be your priority when considering your involvement in any ministry.
- *be humble* – music is fun, and people love it. As a result, it is incredibly easy to focus on ourselves and the music when things sound really good or the worship was especially moving during a service. Always remember the One who gave you your talent. An attitude of humility is essential.
- *be teachable* – our talents can always be developed and improved, and we should be willing to humbly accept direction and constructive criticism from others and learn from it. Attend a worship seminar or conference to grow both musically and spiritually.
- *be a reflection of Christ* – we ask that should at any time during your involvement you feel your personal life or conduct is not reflecting what we are about or what Christ would have, that you voluntarily step down until the situation changes.
- *be modest in dress* - be aware of your appearance. Be comfortable, but be appropriate. Ask yourself – does what I wear distract others from worshiping Jesus? Would it be considered inappropriate by some? Will it draw attention to me? If so, then rethink your outfit. Choir members should wear black tops.
- *(new members only) Understand a probationary period will be in effect* – those invited to join the music ministry will be on minimum 4 week probationary period during which they are expected to attend all rehearsals, even if they are not scheduled to lead. This will allow ample time to learn songs and the leading style of the team and team leader. It is also an indicator of the person's commitment to this ministry.

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SECTIONAL RESPONSIBILITIES:

VOCALS (on-microphone):

- must be capable of singing on pitch
- must be able to blend with others
- sing in a contemporary style
- work together outside of practice if necessary
- decide who will sing what part(s) – melody vs. harmonies
- if singing harmonies, use a contemporary style
- lead the congregation in authentic physical expressions of worship
- learn to use a microphone stand to free up your hands
- learn songs well enough to not rely on reading the lyrics
- take direction from team leader on when to sing/not sing
- sing with Choir one time per month
- put away own microphone, cable, stand and music

CHOIR:

- lead the congregation in authentic physical expressions of worship
- learn lyrics well enough so won't have your eyes on the music all the time
- must attend rehearsal TUE before the scheduled SUN if you want to sing
- there is no "commit for a season" as in the past. if you can sing that week, drop in!
- wear black tops/shirts. Please avoid low necklines.
- Be consistent in the spot you stand in rehearsal and on a SUN morning

DRUMS/PERCUSSION:

- be able to set and keep tempo, so as to not distract the band or the worshipers
- support the needs of the song musically and rhythmically
- be sensitive to each song's message and drum requirements
- follow team leader's lead during songs (continue, speed up, don't play, etc.)
- arrive early to set up equipment and be ready to start on time
- put away / cover drum equipment

ACOUSTIC GUITARS:

- know all basic chords in first and barred positions, including major & minor 7ths
- if you are the 2nd guitarist, use different positions and voicing of chords so as to not double what the lead guitarist is playing.
- Be able to use a capo
- ALWAYS tune up BEFORE rehearsal and services
- If you cannot play the exact strumming pattern, then strum the chord once per chord
- be able to modulate key during a song
- follow team leader's directions during songs (continue, speed up, strum once, etc.)
- arrive early to set up equipment and be ready to start on time
- be sensitive to each song's message and guitar requirements
- be willing to not play if a song requires it, or if asked by the team leader
- be willing to lead a song if asked/needed
- keep your equipment in good working order, so it stays in tune and is reliable
- put away own equipment

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ELECTRIC GUITARS:

- know all basic chords in first and barred positions, including major & minor 7ths
- if you are the 2nd guitarist, use different positions and voicing of chords so as to not double what the lead guitarist is playing.
- Be able to use a capo
- ALWAYS tune up BEFORE rehearsal and services
- do NOT strum, as your electric will overwhelm the acoustic guitarist leading
- be able to modulate key during a song
- use arpeggios, power chords at appropriate times
- use time-based effects sparingly (e.g. delay)
- follow team leader's directions during songs (continue, speed up, don't play, etc.)
- arrive early to set up equipment and be ready to start on time
- be sensitive to each song's message and guitar requirements
- be willing to not play if a song requires it, or if asked by the team leader
- be willing to lead a song if asked/needed
- keep your equipment in good working order, so it stays in tune and is reliable
- put away own equipment

ELECTRIC BASS

- be able to lock-in with the drummer
- be proficient enough to play a chord chart unseen
- be able to transpose on the fly if chord charts require it
- use dynamics and rhythm techniques to enhance the music
- ALWAYS tune up BEFORE rehearsal and services
- be able to modulate key during a song
- follow team leader's directions during songs (continue, speed up, don't play, etc.)
- arrive early to set up equipment and be ready to start on time
- be sensitive to each song's message and musical requirements
- be willing to not play if a song requires it, or if asked by the team leader
- keep your equipment in good working order, so it stays in tune and is reliable
- put away own equipment

KEYBOARDS:

- practice songs/chords ahead of time
- work on playing alternate voicings of chords
- work together outside of practice if necessary
- don't play with LEFT hand if there is a bass player present
- follow team leader's directions during songs (continue, speed up, etc.)
- arrive early to set up equipment and be ready to start on time
- be sensitive to each song's message and guitar requirements
- be willing to not play if a song requires it, or if asked by the team leader
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SOLO INSTRUMENTS (flute, sax, trumpet, etc.) –

- Understand that these instruments are not lead instruments; they are spice that enhances the music. And as with spice, when used correctly, they can take things to another level. We will use these sparingly in the services that use contemporary music
- must be proficient enough to play in key and play melodic lines to accent
- do NOT play melody when singers are leading
- ALWAYS tune up BEFORE rehearsal and services
- be capable of writing out own music, or finding someone who can
- follow team leader's directions during songs (continue, speed up, don't play, etc.)
- arrive early to setup equipment and be ready to start on time
- be sensitive to each song's message and musical requirements
- be willing to not play if a song requires it, or if asked by the team leader
- keep your equipment in good working order, so it stays in tune and is reliable
- not overplay or play so loud as to distract from the singing/worship, or draw attention

APPLICATION PROCESS

Applying to the music ministry won't be that difficult if you are prepared both musically and spiritually. The purpose of this application process is to determine your musical proficiency, spiritual maturity, commitment, and personal compatibility with our team and approach to leading worship. At the end of this process, an invitation may (or may not) be extended to join the worship team. To get started:

- submit the Music Ministry Application (available at praiseteam.WilliamDoney.com)
- someone will contact you within 2 weeks to schedule an informal interview
- *The Interview:* this is a time for the team leader and possibly another member to meet you, talk about the music ministry, answer any questions you may have, and generally get to know you. At this time we will also schedule a musical audition (held on an available Tuesday evening).
- *The Audition:* This will be a time to assess your musical proficiency on your instrument or voice. We know that even saying the word "audition" can cause stress and make someone nervous. But if you are musically prepared, this step shouldn't be a big deal for you. We will do our best to make it a fun and positive experience. At the audition you can expect to sing / play along with other members of the music team. We will ask you to learn and play 3 songs with us (you will have access to the song charts ahead of time to practice). These songs are chosen by the team leader and will be songs we typically play on a Sunday morning. What we are looking for is how well you play/sing, how well you blend with the band, and how well you follow the leader and dynamic changes in the song. We may also ask you to sing/play solo. Or to play a song you haven't seen before to see how well you can pickup a chord chart and jump in after little or no rehearsal (which isn't an uncommon occurrence on a Sunday morning!). After the audition, we'll sit with you for a few minutes to ask how you thought it went.
- Decision by leadership – you can expect to hear within a few days. We will never say "no" to someone who applies. However, we may say "not now", which means we don't feel you are ready at this time, and that you need further time to work on your skills. We will recommend things for you to work on (e.g. timing, pitch, take lessons, etc.). You are welcome to re-audition at a later date once you have worked on our recommendations. If you are not invited to join when you first apply, please don't take it personally, as it is not a reflection of who you are in Christ. We want everyone to be successful. And putting someone in the ministry and on the platform before they are ready will only frustrate them, the team, and possibly the congregation. If things went well and you are invited to join the ministry, there will be a probationary period on the worship team during which we will confirm your skills and attitude mesh with the rest of the team.

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Additional comments on the Application Process: As much as musical competence is a bottom-line necessity, we are primarily looking for folks who are worshipers of God and good team players. It's important that team members are able to follow the direction of the worship leader, find their place within a band, and also pray for God's presence in and blessing over our church's worship of Him. Again, from our perspective, leading worship is not just about musical ability and performing. It's also about offering all that we are, with discernment, in order to bless God and others. Again, being spiritually and musically prepared will make a difference.

SCHEDULES

- All musicians and vocalists will be scheduled on a rotating basis, dependant on individual schedules, proficiency, and the musical (position) needs of a particular service.
- We will make every effort to provide an opportunity for everyone serve at least one time per month
- Please keep your schedule updated so we know your availability at least 2 months in advance, by accessing the online schedule (more information will be given on this).

REHEARSALS

- Attendance at rehearsal is required to participate on the following Sunday morning. We know that life happens and something may come up at the last minute requiring you to miss rehearsal, but we hope that you will do your best to have this be a once-in-a-while occurrence.
- Rehearsal will be Tuesday night for those scheduled to lead on the following Sunday
- Rehearsals will start promptly at 7:30
- We will do our best to end by 9:00, unless there is agreement to stay longer
- There may be times when the band/musicians will be asked to arrive later, so that the vocalists can rehearse alone
- Please be considerate of everyone's time by arriving EARLY, especially if you need to setup equipment, prepare your music, or socialize.
- A draft song list for the service will be available the weekend before rehearsal
- Chord charts for songs will be available on the website praiseteam.WilliamDoney.com
- YouTube links to audio of new songs will also be available on the website
- Please remember that rehearsals are not the time to learn the song. Please make every effort to listen to the song (and play through the chord chart) prior to rehearsal so we can be productive with the time we have as a group.

SUNDAY MORNING SERVICES

- Check your email SAT night or SUN morning for any last minute song or service changes
- Be "in place" and "ready to sing/play" before 7:45.
- Sound check will begin promptly at 7:45, followed by a run through of the service's music
- If you need time to setup, please arrive earlier
- If you need time to socialize with others, please arrive earlier.
- Please take all water and bathroom breaks before coming to the platform
- When we break for prayer after the run-through and before the service starts, please avoid going out into the narthex or down the hallway so you don't get stopped by someone wanting to chat.
- Bring your GREAT ATTITUDE and a song in your heart.